

**“Tools for Schools”**  
**OPI Methamphetamine Prevention Education Project**  
**Grades 9-12**  
**Teacher's Lesson Plan**

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**Title:** Families & Meth

**Audience:** Grades 9-12

**Learner Objectives**

Students will—

- Learn how families operate like a system
- Understand that effective families are cohesive and flexible
- Understand how methamphetamine use impacts the entire family

**Life Skills Taught**

- Family interactions
- Responsibility
- Hope for the future

**Materials Needed**

- PowerPoint projector
- Screen
- Computer with PowerPoint program software
- Used popular magazines (look at your library or ask the hairdresser for some he/she is throwing out)
- Masking tape

**Time Needed**

50 minutes

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**Teaching Tips**

Here are some tips for leading this activity:

- Prepare yourself. Don't rely on your previous experience to “save the day” because you did not prepare and review the materials.
- Be clear on what the curriculum is and isn't. Some things students want or need will not be included in this curriculum.

- Use the curriculum as a guide. Use it to meet the needs of the students and feel free to experiment with the delivery of this information.
- Expect to be challenged. Student may have heard information that is at odds with your presentation. Take it in stride and focus on facts.
- Create a positive learning environment.
- Use a variety of techniques to meet various learning styles.
- Don't be defensive when participants disagree. State your position and acknowledge theirs.

### **PowerPoint Basics**

PowerPoint is a modern method of presenting a slide program without a slide projector and also provides animation and sound. There are lots of manuals that teach the basics of using this program. Here are some basic tips for effectively using PowerPoint as an educational tool:

F5—pressing this key is a simple method to activate the slide show. You can accomplish the same thing by moving your mouse over the “slideshow” icon in the lower left-hand corner of your screen.

ESC—hitting the “escape” key will end a program.

Shift-B—hitting these keys will create a black screen. Use if you want to stop in the middle of a program and have a discussion without having a distracting image on the screen. Hit it again to return to the PowerPoint presentation.

Shift-W—hitting these keys will create a white screen. Like the black screen command described above, you can hit these keys to return to the program when you are ready.

ALT-Tab—by holding down the ALT key and pressing the “Tab” key, you can easily move between a PowerPoint program and other programs on your computer.

Down-Arrow Key—this key is used to move forward in the slide show, and except for self-timed programs, must be used to advance from one slide to the next.

Up-Arrow Key—this key is used to move backwards in the slide show to the previous slide.

## **Dealing with Resistant Learners**

In nearly every teaching situation, you are likely to encounter at least one difficult learner or resistor. When you encounter a difficult student, do not appear to notice they are acting angry or hostile with their body language. Do not give the negative person direct eye contact while you are teaching content.

Many educators get caught up in the negative web of the difficult learner. They watch every nuance of the negative learner and try to convince the nay-sayer by debate in front of the group to change his/her attitude. This approach is rarely successful in ever changing the attitude, but it does make the entire group aware of who the problem is and how much power she/he has over the educator.

Seek out the other learners who are on board and focus your attention on them. You have a much better chance of success at making an impact with this focus of your energy.

This presentation requires active facilitation from the teacher. You will be expected to engage your students in active discussion. If you are not comfortable teaching in this way, you may want to partner with another teacher and team teach this lesson together.

## **Introduction: (2-3 minutes)**

Methamphetamine is a drug unlike many others. It does not discriminate when it comes to those who abuse it. The ingredients to create meth are readily available. It is highly addictive. And, its affects run throughout our communities.

Today we are going to discuss how methamphetamine affects families. Often users think they are only affecting themselves. This is not the case.

## **Slide 1: Series Title**

**Slide 2: Family & Meth** (Hit down-arrow key once to bring in subtitle.)

**Slide 3: What is a family?** (Hit the down-arrow key just once to bring in all graphics.)

**Activity:** (10-15 minutes)

What is a family? This seems like a pretty easy question to answer. Let's see what we come up with. I am going to start a sentence: "A family to me is...."

I am handing out magazines to each of you. I am going to give you 56 seconds to look through the magazine and tear out something that represents to you, how you would finish this sentence. Don't worry about neatness here. You can use pictures, words, whatever you want.

Ready, set, go.....

Okay, who would like to share how they finished the sentence? As students share, have them tape their magazine tear out to the wall. You are creating a collage of responses on the wall. As they are sharing and placing the tear on the collage, write on the white board or flip chart what their representation is --- for example, they may say "parents," or "love, trust" or "my guitar." There are no judgments here --- let them put anything up --- but you may want to ask them why a guitar means family to them. Perhaps their family is musical or perhaps that is how the youth escapes when things aren't going well in the family.

After everyone who has volunteered has put up his/her tear, say something like this (showing slide 3 and 4): As you can see, a family means different things to different people. Families come in all different shapes, sizes, configurations, and colors. Families include biological, adoptive, marriage relationships, friends, and even pets! There is no one way to be a family.

NOTE: Do not require students to share in this activity. Unfortunately for some families, the term family means violence, anger, disappointment, etc. When you discuss the meaning of family, acknowledge that there is no perfect family and that some families aren't doing so well. Sometimes members of families who are having problems identify their true family as friends or others.

**Slide 4: Families: All Forms, Sizes and Colors** (Hit down-arrow key 6 times.)

- Families come in all forms, sizes and colors.
- Some families are close and others are not.
- Some families are predictable in what they expect from family members. Others do not.



**Slide 5: Families Operate Best When:** (Hit down-arrow key 3 times.)

- Families operate best when family members are close but not enmeshed
  - Enmeshed families do so much together that individual members do not have their own identity
  - Families that do not do anything together don't function well either, as in this case there is no identity as a family. The members may as well be a group of strangers standing at a bus stop.
- Family members operate best when families are flexible enough to allow for change when the need arises
  - Rigid families do not change rules as children grow and situations change
  - A family is more than just the sum of the members. It is a unit in and of itself. Like a cake. When you make a cake you add sugar, eggs, flour, milk, etc. But after the cake is baked it is no longer simply a pile of ingredients --- it is something new --- a cake!
- Families are like a mobile over a baby's crib. You touch one part and the rest of the mobile moves. (Here you can illustrate this using the balloon activity on page 7 of this lesson plan).
- Families that are in balance do the best, but all families get out of balance from time to time as situations change.
- Families get way out of balance when someone in the family is using methamphetamine. Families stay out of balance causing a crisis.

**Slide 6: When a Family Member is involved with Meth...** (Hit down-arrow just once.)

- When a family member is involved with methamphetamine family closeness changes.
  - The addicted family member may pull away from the others.
  - Other family members may pull away because they don't know how to help or they may not understand what is happening to the addicted person.
  - Family arguments may increase

- Family patterns change
  - The family may no longer do things together
  - Family members may become angry with one another or cry a lot because of the unpredictability in the family
- Family rules change
  - Parents may have stricter rules for children
  - Or they may resort to not having rules because they are frustrated
  - Rules about privacy may change

**Slide 7: Costs to Your Family When a Family Member is Doing Meth** (Hit down arrow key 6 times.)

There are costs to your family if you do methamphetamine

- Enjoyable time together is lost
- Worry and anxiety
- Depression and guilt
- Loss of productivity at work
- Loss of savings, home, or retirement
- Loss of a son/daughter; brother/sister; grandson/granddaughter

**Slide 8: If You Are Thinking of Trying Meth...** (Hit down-arrow key just once.)

So you may say --- well, I only use methamphetamine once in awhile, or when at parties. If this is the case, you are most likely still having an affect on your family. Here is a checklist for yourself--are you:

- No longer doing the activities you once enjoyed
- Staying away from home
- Avoiding family gatherings
- Arguing with family members
- No longer caring about your appearance
- Not eating

**Slide 9: If You Answered Yes...** (Hit down-arrow key 3 times to activate all graphics.)

If you answered yes to any of the previous questions, you should stop what you are doing and seek help. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness but rather strength—recognizing that you cannot tackle a tough problem alone.

**Slide 10: But My Parents Don't Care...** (To activate the sound track, click on the speaker icon.)

But my parents don't care.... Have you ever heard yourself saying this? Parents sometimes have funny ways of showing how they care. They learned this from their own family. Most parents really do care.

- Think again --- listen to what this Montana father has to say about losing his daughter to meth addiction and how it affected his family.

**Slide 11: My Parents Have No Clue** (To activate the sound track, click on the speaker icon.)

"My parents have no clue..." Have you heard yourself saying this?

- Your parents may be unaware of your risk-taking behaviors
- Unfortunately, many parents find out after a crises
- Or when it is too late....
- Let's listen to more of what this Montana father has to say.

**Slide 12: Talk to Someone** (Hit down-arrow key just once.)

If you are using methamphetamine, talk to someone now!

- Parents
- Brother or sister
- School teacher or counselor
- Friend
- Pastor

*Special Note: This slide automatically transitions to the following line:*

- You are affecting everyone in your family if you are using methamphetamine!

**Slide 13: And this is one drug that...** (Hit down-arrow key just once. Then click on the speaker icon to activate the sound track.)

Let's listen to what this Montana father says about the impacts of meth on his family.

**Slide 14: End slide**

### **Additional Activity**

**Balloon Activity:** This activity reinforces the idea that a family is a system that is connected. Ask students to get into groups of 4-5 people. Have one blown up balloon for each group. Ask the students to form a circle

and hold hands. Give each group a balloon. Tell them the goal is to keep the balloon in the air without breaking the circle or letting go of hands. The group who keeps the balloon in the air the longest is the "winner."

After all the groups have either dropped the balloon, or you have called "time," ask what happened as they tried to keep the balloon in the air. You will get responses such as "it was hard to keep holding hands while keeping the balloon up," "we had to stretch and move around to keep it up," "we had to use different parts of our bodies to keep it up," etc.

Point out that your group is like a family and that when one family member is involved in methamphetamine, the others have to "move" with that person by adapting, stretching, trying to understand what is happening.

### **Additional Resources**

Galvin K. & Brommel, B. (2000). *Family communication: Cohesion and change*. (5<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Strong, B., DeVault, C., & Sayad, B. (1998). *The marriage and family experience: Intimate relationships in a changing society*. (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Beaumont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Meth Free MT web site: [www.methfreeMT.org](http://www.methfreeMT.org)

Montana Meth Project: [www.montanameth.org](http://www.montanameth.org) and [www.notevenonce.com](http://www.notevenonce.com)

Life or Meth: [www.lifeormeth.org](http://www.lifeormeth.org)

### **Vocabulary to Know**

**Enmeshment** happens when family members over-identify with the family and do not have independence or see themselves as individuals.

**Cohesion** refers to the emotional bonding that family members have with one another. How connected family members are with one another.

**Adaptability** is the flexibility within a family that allows change to take place as needed. For example, allowing a teenager to go to the movie with friends in the evening rather than a matinee as he or she had done in the younger years.

A project of the Montana Office of Public Instruction,  
Linda McCulloch, State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Funded by Attorney General Mike McGrath and the Montana Department of  
Justice



"Tools for Schools" was developed by the MSU Meth Education Partnership under a grant from the Montana Office of Public Instruction, Contract #OPI104-994P.

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# Tools for Schools

# "Families & Meth"

## Grades 9-12



A project of the Montana Office of Public Instruction,  
Linda McCulloch, State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Funded by Attorney General Mike McGrath and the  
Montana Department of Justice

# Family & Methamphetamine



Users are not alone in their  
addiction



# What is a family?

- A family to me is.....





# Families: All Forms, Sizes, and Colors

Families come in many different forms



Some families are close while others are not



Some families have predictable patterns while others do not

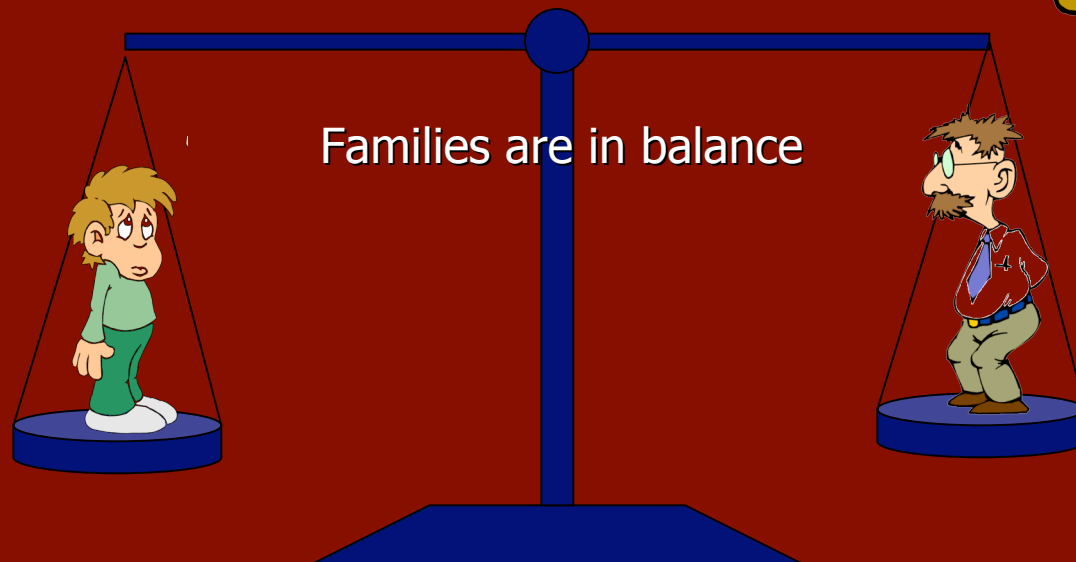


# Families Operate Best When:

Family members are close but not enmeshed



Family members have rules but flexibility to change when the need arises



# When a family member is involved with methamphetamine ...

- Family closeness changes
- Family patterns change
- Family rules are challenged
- Everyone is affected



# Costs to your Family when a Family Member is doing Meth

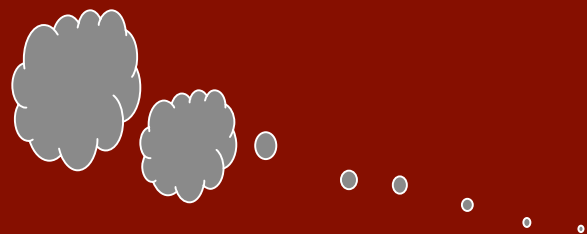
- Enjoyable time together is lost
- Worry and anxiety
- Depression and guilt
- Loss of productivity at work
- Loss of savings, home, or retirement
- Loss of a son/daughter; brother/sister; grandson/granddaughter; nephew/niece



If you are thinking of trying meth or have experimented with meth use this checklist for yourself. Are you:

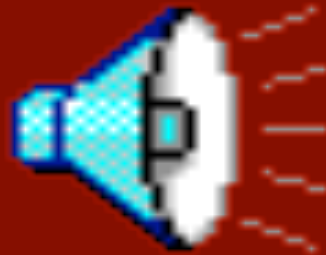
- No longer doing the activities you once enjoyed
- Staying away from home
- Avoiding family gatherings
- Arguing with family members
- No longer caring about your appearance
- Not eating

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions then stop and seek help.



# But my parents don't care...

- Have you heard yourself saying this?
- Think again --- listen to what this Montana father has to say about methamphetamine and how it affected his family.

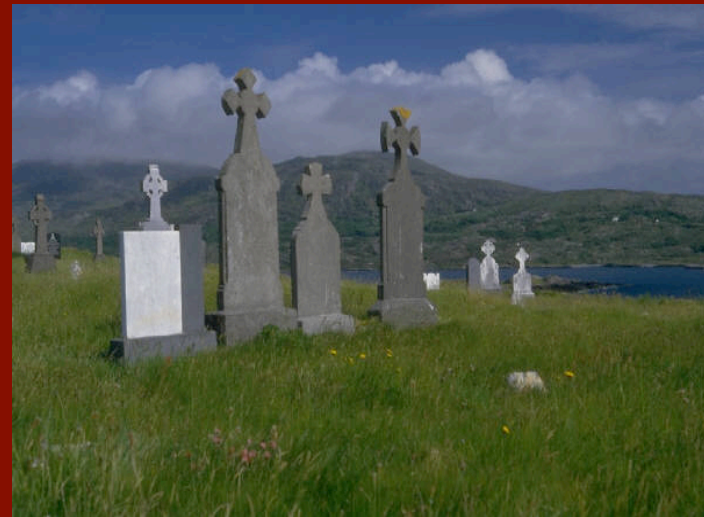


# My parents have no clue!

Your parents may be unaware of your risk-taking behaviors

Unfortunately, many parents find out after a crisis

Or when it is too late....

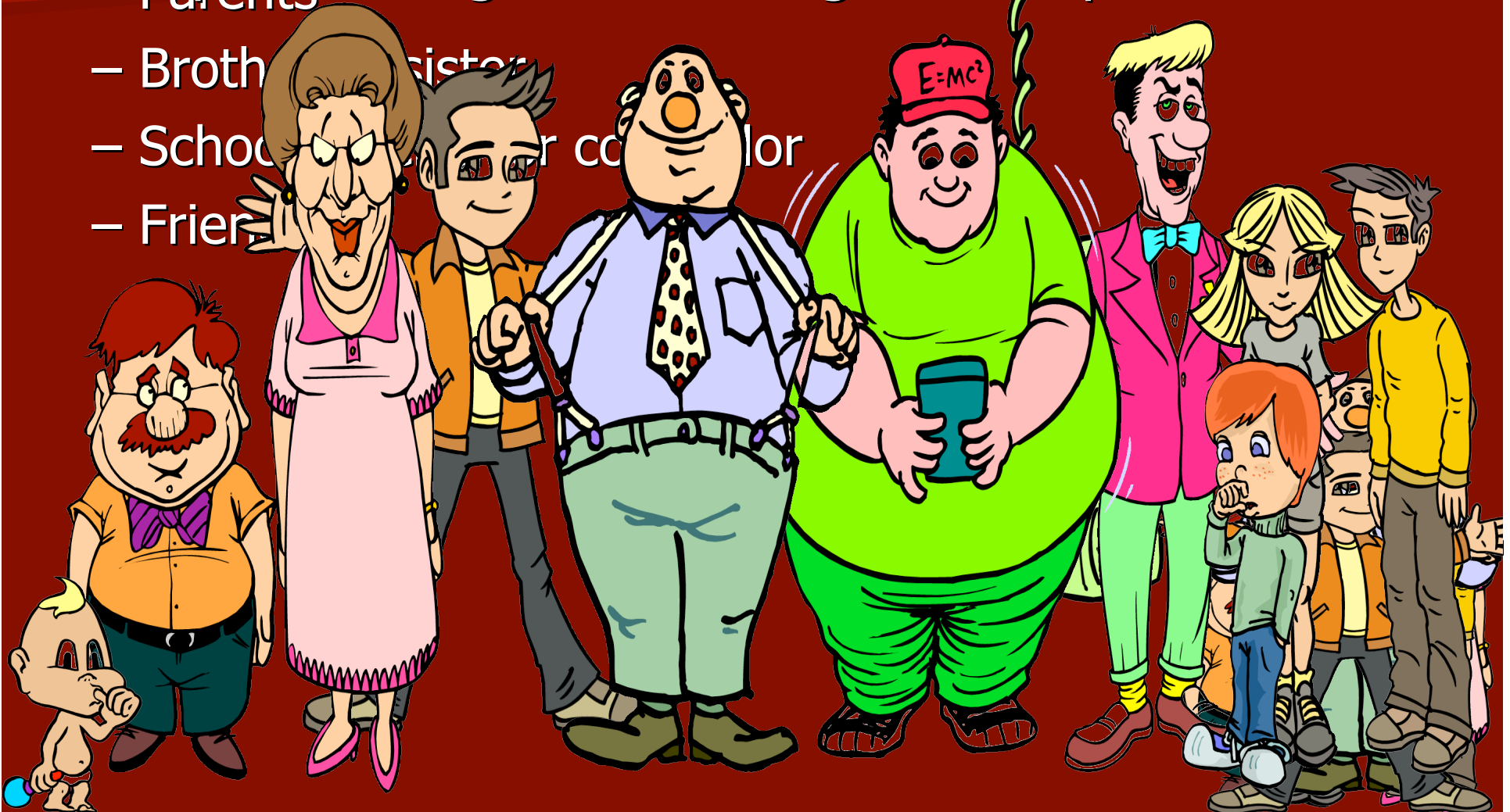




# Talk to Someone

- If you are having problems, talk to someone. You are affecting everyone in your family if you are experimenting with or using methamphetamine!

- Parents
- Brother or sister
- School or counselor
- Friends



And this is one drug that is  
very difficult to stop using once  
a person starts.



# "Tools for Schools"

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